



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

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## **Elk Grove Psychologist Surrenders License, Resolving Sexual Misconduct Case**

SACRAMENTO – In a stipulated settlement with the California Board of Psychology, Elk Grove psychologist Paul Steven Woodward, Psy.D., surrendered his license to practice psychology effective Monday, July 10. Without the license, Woodward can no longer legally practice psychology in California.

The Board of Psychology filed a formal Accusation of misconduct against Woodward in February alleging three violations of the California Business and Professions Code provisions that govern conduct for psychologists. Woodward was accused of sexual misconduct, gross negligence and violation of American Psychological Association ethical standards, for allegedly having a sexual affair with a patient.

After conducting an investigation, the Board accused the psychologist of having a sexual relationship with a patient from February 1996 through 1998. Woodward treated the patient from June 1995 through July 1998, during which time he also provided marital counseling for the patient and her husband and evaluated the couple's minor son.

Woodward admitted one of the alleged violations, that of sexual misconduct. By agreeing to the stipulated revocation of his license, Woodward not only gave up his right to practice psychology in California, but also waived his right to a formal hearing at which he could have presented a defense against the charges. The Board first licensed Woodward in 1993.

Sexual contact of any kind between a therapist and a patient is unethical and illegal in California. Additionally, with regard to former patients, such contact within two years after termination of therapy is also illegal and unethical.

Therapists and patients can learn more about how to prevent and report sexual exploitation in the publication "Professional Therapy Never Includes Sex," available from the California Board of Psychology. The booklet is available at the Board of Psychology's Web site, [www.psychboard.ca.gov](http://www.psychboard.ca.gov). Consumers can check the status of a psychologist's license or file a complaint, through the Web site or by calling toll-free (866) 503-3221.

The Board licenses more than 15,000 psychologists statewide, enforces the laws and regulations governing the practice of psychology, and works to protect the health, safety and welfare of consumers of psychological services.

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